POLITICAL PROGRAMME OF VIET NAM ALLIANCE OF NATIONAL, DEMOCRATIC AND PEACE FORCES

(Full text, unanimously passed by the Alliance's July 30-31, 1968 Second Conference)

THE 1954 Geneva Agreements on Viet Nam have formally recognized the independence, sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity of Viet Nam.

The Vietnamese people, proud of their victory, thought, after ten years of war, they would be able to free themselves for ever from slavery and to enjoy a life in peace and happiness.

Their dream would have come true if it had not been for the U.S. Government's violation of the Geneva Accords and its ever increasing interference in the affairs of South Viet Nam, its setting up of the Ngo Dinh Diem administration and use of this regime of traitors and lackeys to carry out U.S. neo-colonialist schemes, to apply a fascist policy of unparalleled barbarity, and to suppress the patriotic and democratic movement of the South Vietnamese people.

Faced with our people's unshakable will for independence and rock-like determination, the U.S. has been resorting to violence with growing crudeness, first by introducing "advisers" into South Viet Nam, then by committing en masse over half a million U.S. expeditionary troops, and forces of its allies, to a direct aggression against South Viet Nam. At the same time, it has been dumping bombs and shells on North Viet Nam in a savage war of destruction.

The prolonged U.S. war of aggression, continuously escalated, has been causing untold grief and mourning to the people of South Viet Nam, making havoc of the land of Viet Nam, and rendering the life of the South Vietnamese people utterly miserable.

As they all have been installed by the U.S. to serve its aggressive schemes, the various Saigon administrations, from Ngo Dinh Diem to Nguyen Van Thieu, Nguyen Cao Ky and Tran Van Huong at present, are but traitors to the country and the people, and instruments of foreigners. They have sold out the nation's sovereignty and the lives of the South Vietnamese people, and have been the causes of our fellow-countrymen's wretched plight and servitude.

Resolved not to submit to violence, the South Vietnamese people, united millions as one, have resolutely risen up with unusual heroism to fight for their sacred national rights, their right to independence, and their right to be masters of their destiny. Our people, from the towns to the countryside, from the highlands to the plains, with a high determination, have foiled all the aggressive schemes of the enemy and been winning one victory after another. And since early spring this year, in the new period of the fight, the revolutionary armed forces and people of South Viet Nam have stood up with an unmatched mettle, attacking the enemy everywhere, simultaneously and repeatedly, right in the towns and his most strongly guarded sanctuaries, even in Saigon—the military and political nerve centre of the U.S. imperialists and the puppet administration.

The revolutionary armed forces and people have been recording successes of great import and significance, and have brought about a situation conducive to the defeat of the U.S. imperialists' war of aggression, overthrow of the puppet regime, and peace and glorious independence for the nation.

As their failures grow, the U.S. imperialists' stubborn and savage nature as aggressor and the Saigon puppet administration's odious and brutal features become increasingly transparent and their challenge to the aspirations of the people of all strata more blatant. As a result, the front against the U.S. imperialists and their stooges in the urban areas has been considerably broadening, rallying people of all walks of life from the working people to students, intellectuals, bourgeois to even civil servants, officers and soldiers of the puppet administration.

The basic and most earnest aspirations of our compatriots now are independence, national sovereignty, democratic freedoms, an end to the war, peace, neutrality, a life of plenty and happiness, and ultimate reunification of the country.

The Viet Nam Alliance of National, Democratic and Peace Forces, which came into being early spring this year with a policy and line consonant with the people's demands and aspirations, has enjoyed the enthusiastic response and participation of patriotic people of all social strata, political leanings and shades and religious beliefs, who have voluntarily resolved to do their share in the cause of national liberation.

In its National Salvation Manifesto, the V.N.A.N.D.P.F. has made clear that its line is "to unite all patriotic forces and individuals, to resolutely resist foreign aggression, to completely overthrow the Nguyen Van Thieu—Nguyen Cao Ky puppet regime, to set up a national coalition government, to achieve independence, democracy and peace."

With a single eye, the V.N.A.N.D.P.F. hereby solemnly proclaims its Political Programme where have been charted concrete policies and courses of action to save and rebuild the country, achieving an independent, free, democratic, peaceful, neutral and prosperous South Viet Nam, thereby making it possible to gradually achieve the reunification of the country.

The Political Programme comprises the following main points:

I — NATIONAL SALVATION

To unite all patriotic forces and individuals, resolutely to resist the war of aggression, to overthrow the puppet regime, to set up a national coalition government, to win independence, democracy and peace.

1—National salvation is the cause of the entire nation, and the agency vouching for its victory is the bloc of great national union. The V.N.A.N.D.P.F. advocates the union of all patriotic forces and individuals, regardless of political leaning, racial group, religion and social standing, in the present struggle for independence and national sovereignty as well as in the future national reconstruction.

2 — The South Vietnamese people cherish peace, but that must be a peace in honour and freedom. The Viet Nam Alliance of National, Democratic and Peace Forces is for the recovery of independence and sovereignty for South Viet Nam, and the U.S. Government's ending of its war, withdrawal of its troops and those of its allies from South Viet Nam, dismantling of U.S. military bases here, and respect for the independence and sovereignty of Viet Nam as provided for by the 1954 Geneva Agreements on Viet Nam. It is imperative that the national independence, national sovereignty and territorial integrity of South Viet Nam be recognized and respected by various governments in the world. The Viet Nam Alliance of National, Democratic and Peace Forces is ready to discuss the above questions with the U.S. Government.

3 — The South Viet Nam National Front for Liberation — a patriotic force which has been credited with tremendous contributions to the mustering of the necessary forces for the organization and leading of the fight against foreign aggression in the past years—cannot be absent in the settlement of the problems of South Viet Nam. The Viet Nam Alliance of National, Democratic and Peace Forces favours contacts and exchanges of views with the South Viet Nam National Front for Liberation to map out the course of the common effort, to win back national independence, restore peace, rebuild the country, and bring welfare and happiness to the entire people.

4 — On the basis of the joint actions of the various patriotic forces and individuals taking part in the struggle for national liberation — including patriotic individuals in the puppet administration and army—a broad national, democratic coalition government will be set up, with as its members representatives of the people of various strata, nationalities, religions, progressive political parties and organizations, patriotic personalities, etc... whose single goal is independence, democracy, peace, neutrality and prosperity in South Viet Nam.

II — NATIONAL CONSTRUCTION

To build South Viet Nam into an independent, free, democratic, peaceful and prosperous state.

After independence, sovereignty and peace have been regained, the V.N.A.N.D.P.F. stands for constant unity with all patriotic forces and individuals in the work of healing the wounds of war, building the country, and making of South Viet Nam an independent, sovereign, free, democratic, peaceful, neutral and prosperous state.

A — DOMESTIC AFFAIRS

1. Political Regime:

— To do away with all vestiges of colonialism and neo-colonialism in South Viet Nam; to completely overthrow the puppet regime; to dissolve the "Senate" and "House of Representatives" created through fraudulent elections; to abolish the constitution approved by the former "Constitutional Assembly"; to cancel all illegal, unequal treaties running counter to the interests of the nation and world peace and signed between the South Vietnamese puppet regime and the U.S. or other foreign countries; to abrogate all anti-popular laws enacted by the puppets, and all arbitrary and illegal decrees, decisions and verdicts by the puppets that prejudice the life, property, dignity, and interests of the citizens.

— To establish a really democratic and free republican regime, hold general elections in strict conformity with the rule of equality, universal suffrage, direct and secret ballots, to elect a truly representative Constitutional Assembly. This body will work out a democratic constitution taking into full account the aspirations and interests of the entire people. The constitution will define conditions for the establishment and organization of a sound administrative machine, truly democratic and having the character of broad national coalition.

— All citizens will be equal in all respects. The people will fully enjoy genuinely democratic freedoms — freedom of movement, freedom of assembly, freedom of organization, freedom of travel abroad, etc..., without any discrimination. The inviolability of the body, residence and personal correspondence will be respected. Parliamentary immunity will be ensured.

— To set free all people detained under any form by the U.S.-puppet regime in South Viet Nam for patriotic activities or opposition. People in exile or living as refugees in foreign countries because of the terror and suppression by the puppet regime have the right to return to the homeland. To reconsider unfair sentences under Common Law for amnesty or commutation.

— To enforce equal rights, political, economic, cultural and social, for men and women.

— To achieve equality among religions, without any discrimination. To oppose all divisive schemes of the imperialists and their quislings.

— To protect and help restore pagodas, churches, shrines, temples and communal houses destroyed by enemy bombs and shells.

— To follow a policy of union and equality among all nationalities within the national community of Viet Nam.

— To look after the interests of overseas Vietnamese, encourage them and provide them with facilities to return to the homeland to contribute to national construction.

— To respect the legitimate interests of foreign residents in South Viet Nam.

— To put an end to forcible assimilation practised by the U.S.-puppets as regards Chinese residents.

All units, or individuals among the officers, soldiers, police, and civil servants of the South Viet Nam puppet administration who take patriotic actions and join in the struggle against the U.S. war of aggression and the puppet regime under any forms (revolt, mutiny, defection to the people with weapons, sympathy with, and support for, the South Vietnamese people's struggle for independence, democracy and peace) and even if they merely refuse to carry out orders of the enemy—will be welcomed by the people and rewarded accordingly.

Those who are guilty of crimes against the people but show sincere repentance and wish to come back to the people will be granted amnesty; if they redeem their faults with distinguished service, they will be duly rewarded.

After recovery of independence and under the new regime, these people will be allowed without any discrimination to continue in their jobs, if they so desire.

2. Economy :

— To build an independent and sovereign economy, not dependent on the U.S. imperialists or any other country.

After the return of peace, to make all-out efforts to make good the devastation of war; to solve the problem of unemployment; and to restore the people's normal life on the basis of a vigorous development of the economy which will make the country prosperous.

— To respect and protect the citizens' private ownership of means of production and other property.

— To pay attention to creating favourable conditions for the restoration and development of agricultural production,to grant loans to the peasants for production purposes; to improve techniques; to develop water conservancy and irrigation works; to put into effect a system of prices which will encourage agricultural production and find adequate outlets for agricultural produce.

— To carry out an equitable and reasonable program of land reform in order to help boost agricultural production.

— To enforce land rent reduction.

—The State will negotiate with landowners purchases of lands that exceed a certain quota, which will be shared out to the landless or land-poor peasants. To recognize the ownership of the present peasant holders, of lands distributed to them by the S.V.N.N.F.L. under the force of the circumstances of the Resistance. Those lands entrusted by the S.V.N.N.F.L. to peasants in the absence of the owners will be dealt with appropriately in consideration of the political attitude of the latter.

— To respect the legitimate ownership of land by the Church, Buddhist and other religious communities.

— To give aid and encouragement to plantations of industrial crops and fruit trees.

— To restore and develop industry, small industries and trade.

— To apply a policy of free enterprise useful to the State and beneficial to the people. To give a strong fillip to industrial, trade, communication and transport undertakings with a view to making the people prosperous and the country powerful.

— To abolish monopoly.

— To encourage the production and consumption of home-made goods.

— To establish a stable, independent monetary system.

— To adopt an equitable tax policy.

— To expand the home and foreign trade.

— To maintain economic exchanges with North Viet Nam with a view to mutual assistance and help in the development of both zones.

— To develop economic relations with foreign countries, and to call for economic aid and assistance in funds, techniques, and experts from all countries regardless of political and social systems and on the principles of equality, mutual benefit, without strings attached, and on the basis of respect for South Viet Nam's independence and sovereignty.

— In the development of economy, care will be given to the living conditions of workers, other labouring people and civil servants. To enact a labour law and regulations to ensure the interests of public and private employees; to improve living conditions in labouring people's quarters; to carry out a policy of mutual benefit to capital and labour.

3. Culture, Education, Science, Technique and Public Health :

— To wipe out all vestiges of the decadent, depraved and bastard culture.

— To build a progressive national culture and education; to make all-out efforts to promote the fine traditions of the nation's time-honoured culture; to preserve and develop good customs and habits.

— To endeavour to raise the cultural standard of the people: to eliminate illiteracy, to build more schools of different degrees and complementary education and vocational courses, and to lay foundation for compulsory education.

— To develop science and technique and place them at the service of the people's well-being, national construction, and national defence.

— To make an all-round reform of the system of learning and examinations.

— To use Vietnamese as the teaching medium in all the higher learning establishments.

— To pay attention to the training and fostering of talents.

— To ensure employment for graduates.

— To exempt private schools from taxes in order to reduce school-fees; to exempt poor students from fees and grant them scholarships.

— To give facilities to intellectuals from various branches — scientific, technical, cultural — and writers and artists, to widen their researches, creations and inventions, to improve the regulations concerning those who go to study abroad with a view to serving national construction.

— To look after the people's health; to develop public health service; to reorganize existing hospitals and build fresh ones, more consultation rooms and maternity houses in the towns and the countryside to serve broad masses of the people, and at the same time to push ahead the sanitation and prophylactic movement and bring about a new way of life among the people.

— To establish cultural relations with North Viet Nam, and establish cultural relations with foreign countries.

4. Public Relief :

— To give utmost care to social welfare.

— To look after the life and health of the aged, women, wounded and sick armymen, orphans, invalids, etc...

— To root out all social evils harmful to the dignity and health of women.

— To assist war victims including needy families of puppet armymen.

B — EXTERNAL RELATIONS

— To pursue a foreign policy of peace, non-alignment with any camp or bloc, and non-participation in any military alliance.

— To establish diplomatic relations with all states regardless of their political systems, and on the principles of equality, respect for each other's independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity, non-interference in each other's internal affairs, and peaceful co-existence.

— To attach special importance to the development of friendship with our neighbours: Cambodia and Laos; to develop friendly relations with nationalist countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America.

— To give active support to the movements for national independence of the Asian, African and Latin American peoples.

— To make active contributions to the safeguarding of peace and security in South-East Asia and the world.

— To promote trade with foreign countries and call for economic aid according to the principles of equality, mutual benefit, without strings attached, and on the basis of respect for South Viet Nam's independence and sovereignty.

— To establish cultural relations with foreign countries.

III — REUNIFICATION OF THE COUNTRY

The Governments in South and North Viet Nam will enter into negotiations on the eventual peaceful reunification of the country.

To reunify the country is an earnest aspiration and a sacred duty of our people.

The reality in our country now is that there exist two different political regimes, one in the South, the other in the North. As the reunification of the country cannot be achieved overnight, there must be discussions and negotiations between the South and the North on the basis of equality and consideration for each other's specific conditions, on the eventual peaceful reunification of the country.

— Pending the reunification of the country, relations should be established between the two zones in economy, culture, correspondence, movement, etc...

— South Vietnamese citizens regrouped to the North and North Vietnamese moving to the South (after the return of peace in 1954 — *Ed.*) are free to return to their native places or stay where they are.

— To exchange materials on education, science and technology, literature and arts, between the two zones.

— To exchange delegations of professors, scientific and technical cadres, literary and art workers of the two zones to learn from each other's experiences and develop education, science, technique and culture.

— Students in one zone are free to seek admittance to universities in the other zone if they so desire.

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THE South Vietnamese people are faced with the most dangerous foreign aggression.

Because of the utterly ruthless war of extermination conducted by the U.S. Government, much blood of our people has been shed, numerous crop fields and houses of our people have been devastated, and many of our people have had to live in humiliation and misery.

Our country is being dragged through fire and sword, from the towns to the countryside.

People of one country must love one another. No one can help feeling a deep hatred for the enemy who are piling up their crimes and inflicting tremendous suffering on our country.

Our nation's tradition is one of dauntlessness and heroism, with the people always standing shoulder to shoulder in the gravest hours of the Fatherland.

The Dien Hong Assembly of Elderly Notables (convened by General Tran Hung Dao in the 13th century to seek their advice in face of foreign invasion — *Ed.*) is still fresh in the memory of our patriots.

Continuing this tradition, our people in South Viet Nam have closed their ranks and checked the aggressive will of the enemy, driving them onto the verge of total failure and complete collapse.

However, the nearer our victory, the more numerous our difficulties.

Despite its heavy and repeated setbacks, the U.S. Government still has not drawn in time practical lessons so that a satisfactory solution may be found to end the war. On the contrary it has gone further on the criminal path. In a desperate last-ditch effort, it has been using more lethal means of unheard-of savagery. Our people, therefore, should further close their ranks and rush forward, holding high the banner of unity and victory.

To meet these requirements and at these grave moments of history, the Viet Nam Alliance of National,Democratic and Peace Forces solemnly publishes its Political Programme to be used as a basis for further broadening the bloc of national union, further strengthening the ranks of patriotic people, forming a broad national united front to resist U.S. aggression and save the country, and deal a decisive blow at the aggressors.

At this stage of our grim fight, the Viet Nam Alliance of National, Democratic and Peace Forces constantly stands shoulder to shoulder with the South Viet Nam National Front for Liberation so as to fulfil together the glorious task of saving the country and regaining independence, freedom and peace for the nation.

The Viet Nam Alliance of National, Democratic and Peace Forces earnestly calls on all our compatriots in the towns and other areas still under the enemy's terror in South Viet Nam, intellectuals, youth, students, women, workers, peasants, traders, industrialists, religious believers, personalities, and all patriotic and progressive forces and organizations, to broaden and strengthen their unity to enhance the winning position of the nation and give a powerful impetus to its advance irresistible like a tidal wave toward complete victory over the U.S. aggressors, the overthrow of the whole puppet regime, the recovery of independence, national sovereignty and democratic freedoms, toward peace and happiness for the entire people.

The Viet Nam Alliance of National, Democratic and Peace Forces calls on all the civil servants and officers and men of the puppet regime to try to see that the just, and glorious path of certain victory of the nation is to resist U.S. aggression, whereas the path of the puppets is one of shame, without future and without escape, to have a clear idea of the duties and interests of the Vietnamese people, to go over to, and side definitively with, the people in order to save themselves, their homes and the country and, together with the entire people, build our homeland.

Ever since its foundation, the Viet Nam Alliance of National, Democratic and Peace Forces has been enjoying the active participation and warm support of compatriots at home and abroad, and receiving unreserved support from progressive mass organizations all over the world. The Alliance will strive to live up to the trust of the people by assuming and fulfilling with determination its historic role. It pledges itself to do its best to make active contributions to the just cause of the entire people.

Let our entire people close their ranks and unite millions as one under the banner of national resistance to U.S. aggression and for national salvation! Let us march forward with greater mettle!

South Viet Nam, July 31, 1968

THE VIET NAM ALLIANCE OF NATIONAL, DEMOCRATIC AND PEACE FORCES